

Message Text

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SUBJECT: SECOND INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON JURIDICAL ASPECTS OF
ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

REF: PANAMA 3547

SUMMARY: THE SECOND INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON JURIDICAL
ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE CONCLUDED JUNE 21 WITH
APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PANAMA'S CANAL ASPIRATIONS
AND A "DECLARATION OF PANAMA" ESTABLISHING AN AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF JURISTS. CUBA WAS CHOSEN AS CITE FOR THIRD
CONFERENCE, SCHEDULED FOR 1977, AND CUBANS REPORTEDLY WERE
PRIME MOVERS BEHIND THE SCENES. END SUMMARY

1. THE SECOND INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON JURIDICAL
ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE--A FOLLOW-UP TO THE
JUNE 1974 LIMA MEETING--WAS HELD IN PANAMA JUNE 16-21.
ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, SOME 300 PARTICIPANTS FROM
APPROXIMATELY 20 HEMISPHERIC NATIONS AND AN UNSPECIFIED
NUMBER OF OBSERVERS FROM OTHER NATIONS WERE IN ATTENDANCE.

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AS ANTICIPATED, THE CONFERENCE CONCLUDED ITS FIVE-DAY

MEETING WITH A STRONG RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S CANAL ASPIRATIONS. SPECIFICALLY, THE RESOLUTION (SEE FBIS PANAMA 22055Z JUN 75 FOR FULL TEXT) (1) SUPPORTED PANAMA'S "STRUGGLE" FOR RECOVERY OF THE CANAL AND CANAL ZONE, (2) EXPRESSED "SOLIDARITY" WITH PANAMANIAN POSITION THAT ANY NEW CANAL BE "CONSTRUCTED, MANAGED AND EXPLOITED" BY PANAMA, (3) DEMANDED IMMEDIATE DEMILITARIZATION OF CANAL ZONE, (4) RESOLVED TO "ADVOCATE AND STRUGGLE" FOR THE "EFFECTIVE NEUTRALIZATION" OF THE CANAL, (5) URGED THE GOP AND PANAMANIAN PEOPLE TO CONTINUE MAINTAINING THEIR POSITION IN THE CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, (6) RESOLVED TO "INFORM AND MOBILIZE" PUBLIC OPINION IN "LATIN AMERICA, NORTH AMERICA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD" IN FAVOR OF PANAMA'S DEMANDS, AND (7) DECLARED 1976 AS THE "YEAR OF THE RECOVERY OF THE PANAMA CANAL." THE CANAL ISSUE, WHILE ONLY ONE OF FIVE QUESTIONS ADDRESSED BY CONFERENCE, WAS CLEARLY THE MOST PROMINENT. OPENING DAY SPEAKERS ALL GAVE IT MAJOR EMPHASIS AND SPECIAL JUNE 18 PLENARY SESSION WAS DEVOTED TO HEARING REPORT ON PANAMA'S POSITION AND THE NEGOTIATION BY FOREIGN MINISTRY POLITICAL ADVISER JORGE ILLUECA. ALTHOUGH RESOLUTIONS ON OTHER AGENDA TOPICS WERE PRESUMABLY ALSO APPROVED, LOCAL MEDIA HAS LIMITED ITS COVERAGE THUS FAR TO THE CANAL RESOLUTION AND THE CONFERENCE'S FINAL "DECLARATION OF PANAMA."

2. THE DECLARATION, WHICH CREATED THE "AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF JURISTS," DENOUNCED "NORTH AMERICAN IMPERIALISM" AND "LOCAL OLIGARCHS" AS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN MAJORITY OF LATIN COUNTRIES, DECLARED IT DUTY OF JURISTS TO DENOUNCE THE LEGAL IDEOLOGIES THAT "HIDE ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE," CALLED FOR "CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONS" WITH JURISTS OF "OTHER CONTINENTS" ENGAGED IN SIMILAR TASKS, AND CITES DUTY TO "FIGHT IN COURTS OF OUR COUNTRIES ALL ATTEMPTS AGAINST THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF MAN AND PUBLIC FREEDOMS." PROCLAIMING CONVICTION THAT LEGAL PROFESSION SHOULD ASSOCIATE WITH "THE BATTLE BEING WAGED BY OUR PEOPLE TO BREAK THE BONDS OF DEPENDENCE," THE DECLARATION CALLED ON ALL LIKE-MINDED AMERICAN JURISTS TO JOIN THE ASSOCIATION. PANAMA WAS SELECTED AS PERMANENT LOCATION FOR ASSOCIATION HEADQUARTERS AND THE PANAMANIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONFERENCE PRESIDENT, OSCAR CEVILLE, WAS ELECTED ITS FIRST PRESIDENT. FERNANDO ALVAREZ TABIO, A CUBAN, WAS NAMED VICE PRESIDENT. IN ITS FINAL ACT, THE CONFERENCE ACCEPTED BY ACCLAMATION A CUBAN OFFER TO HOST THIRD INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE IN HAVANA IN 1977.

3. THE CUBAN DELEGATION WAS ACTIVE THROUGHOUT THE AFFAIR AND, ACCORDING TO LOCAL CONSERVATIVE ATTORNEYS WHO HAD

SPOKEN WITH PANAMANIAN DELEGATES, WAS A PRIME MOVER
BEHIND THE SCENES. THE PRINCIPAL CUBAN DELEGATE, MINISTER
OF JUSTICE ARMANDO TO
RES, DELIVERED A TOUGH OPENING
SESSION SPEECH IN WHICH HE INTRODUCED THESIS THAT DEVELOPING
NATIONS HAD RIGHT TO NATIONALIZE FOREIGN HOLDINGS
WITHOUT COMPENSATION; THE PRINCIPLE OF PROMPT AND FULL
COMPENSATION, ACCORDING TO THE CUBAN, WAS AN IMPERIALIST
DEVISE FOR PRECLUDING POOR COUNTRIES FROM NATIONALIZING
LEGITIMATE RESOURCES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. MAKAIL
KRUTOGOLOU, PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOVIET JURISTS--
ATTENDING AS AN OBSERVER IN HIS CAPACITY AS A MEMBER OF
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC JURISTS--MADE A
DISARMAMENT PITCH, STATING INTER ALIA THAT U.S. MILITARY
BASES IN THE CANAL ZONE WERE A PROBLEM OF WORLD INTEREST. AS
REPORTED, KRUTOGOLOU OBSERVED THAT THE ONLY EXPLANATION FOR
U.S. BASES IN LATIN AMERICA IS U.S. OBJECTIVE OF HEMISPHERIC
DOMINATION, EXPLOITATION AND IMPOSITION OF U.S. SYSTEM OF
GOVERNMENT. BASES MIGHT BE UNDERSTOOD IF THEY WERE IN EUROPE;
LATIN AMERICAN BASES FOR PURPOSE OF DEFENDING U.S. AGAINST
USSR MADE NO SENSE.

4. COMMENT: WHILE THE CONFERENCE DELIVERED THE
EXPECTED STRONG ENDORSEMENT OF PANAMA'S CANAL POSITION, THE
CONCLAVE'S RATHER CLEAR LEFTIST COLORATION APPEARS TO HAVE
GIVEN THE GOP SOME PAUSE. PRESIDENT LAKAS DID NOT OPEN THE
CONFERENCE AS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED AND GENERAL TORRIJOS,
WHO MAKES A PRACTICE OF DROPPING IN ON SUCH INTERNATIONAL
MEETINGS HERE, DID NOT APPEAR.
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